

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 EURE-00 PM-07 SS-20 IO-14 L-03

PRS-01 SCI-06 INRE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01

DODE-00 NSC-07 NSCE-00 AEC-11 AECE-00 ACDA-19 DRC-01

SP-03 PA-04 USIE-00 EB-11 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 DLOS-07

COME-00 CG-00 DOTE-00 SSO-00 /163 W

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O R 101835Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9800

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY SUVA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 14058

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MCAP, FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH NUCLEAR TESTS

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: FRENCH HAVE DECLARED EXTENSIVE
"SECURITY ZONE" AROUND THEIR NUCLEAR TEST SITE IN SOUTH
PACIFIC. THEY HAVE ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT THEY EXPECT THIS
SERIES OF ATMOSPHERIC NUCLEAR TESTS TO BE THEIR LAST.
END SUMMARY.

2. ACCORDING TO THE JOURNAL OFFICIEL OF JUNE 8, 1974,
THE GOV WILL SUSPEND MARITIME NAVIGATION IN A "SECURITY
ZONE" ESTABLISHED AROUND THE ISLAND OF MURUROA, IN
FRANCE'S SOUTH PACIFIC NUCLEAR TESTING AREA. THE
"SECURITY ZONE" WILL TAKE EFFECT AT MIDNIGHT GREENWICH
TIME, THE NIGHT OF JUNE 10-11 AND CONTINUE UNTIL FURTHER
NOTICE. THE "SECURITY ZONE" EXTENDS 60 NAUTICAL MILES
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AROUND MURUROA AND ITS 12-MILE TERRITORIAL SEA. FRENCH

MILITARY AUTHORITIES ARE AUTHORIZED BY THE DECREE TO TAKE THE ACTIONS NECESSARY TO SAFEGUARD THE SECURITY OF SHIPS AND CREWS WITHIN THE AREA. ALTHOUGH NOT SPECIFICALLY CITED BY THE DECREE, WE ASSUME THIS COULD INVOLVE SEIZING AND EXPELLING SHIPS THAT ENTER THE ZONE. COPY OF DECREE POUCHED EUR/WE.

3. LAST YEAR FRANCE IMPOSED SIMILAR RESTRICTIONS, GOING BEYOND THE NORMAL NOTICES TO NAVIGATORS AND TO PILOTS, WHICH LED TO INCIDENTS INVOLVING FRENCH SEIZURE OF TWO BOATS (GREENPEACE AND FRI).

4. IN RELATED DEVELOPMENT, THE ELYSEE ANNOUNCED ON JUNE 8 THAT THIS YEAR'S ATMOSPHERIC NUCLEAR TESTS AT MURUROA ARE EXPECTED TO BE THE LAST ("SERONTNORMALEMENT LES DERNIERS DE CE TYPE"). FRANCE, SAID THE ANNOUNCEMENT, WILL BE ABLE TO MOVE TO UNDERGROUND NUCLEAR TESTING AS SOON AS THIS YEAR'S SERIES IS OVER. AT THE END OF THE JUNE 10 CABINET MEETING, THE GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT GISCARD HAD CANCELLED ONE OF THE TEST SHOTS SCHEDULED FOR THIS SUMMER'S SERIES, CITING THE NEED TO "RATIONALIZE" EXPENDITURES CONCERNING NUCLEAR DEFENSE.

5. COMMENT: WHILE GOF IS NOT LOOKING FOR ENCOUNTER WITH NUCLEAR TESTING PROTESTERS, WE HAVE NO DOUBT THAT FRENCH WILL TAKE ACTION TO MEET POSSIBLE REPETITION OF GREENPEACE/FRI PROBLEMS IN "SECURITY ZONE" IF THAT SEEKS NECESSARY. WE ASSUME THAT ANNOUNCEMENT OF "SECURITY ZONE" MEANS THAT FRENCH NUCLEAR TESTS ARE LIKELY TO BEGIN VERY SOON. ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THIS SERIES OF TESTS SHOULD BE THE LAST ATMOSPHERIC TESTING BY FRANCE, AS WELL AS ANNOUNCEMENT THAT ONE TEST OF SERIES HAS ALREADY BEEN CANCELLED, SHOULD AID GOF IN FENDING OFF CRITICISM (DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL) OF FRENCH NUCLEAR TESTING. MOREOVER, BY CANCELLING ONE TEST, GISCARD MAY BE SEEKING TO DEMONSTRATE TO FRENCH THAT DEFENSE SPENDING IS NOT COMPLETELY IMMUNE TO BUDGET CUTTER'S KNIFE AS HE MOVES TO DEAL WITH FRANCE'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. SOME GAULLISTS, HOWEVER, MAY SEE IN CANCELLED TEST EVIDENCE THAT GISCARD CONFIDENTIAL

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INTENDS TO CUT INTO FINANCING OF FRANCE'S NUCLEAR FORCE, AND VOICE THEIR CONCERN. DOMESTIC POLITICAL INCIDENT INVOLVING SERVAN-SCHREIBER'S PUBLIC OBJECTION JUNE 9 TO FRENCH NUCLEAR TESTS, AND HIS SUBSEQUENT DISMISSAL FROM FRENCH CABINET COVERED SEPTEL.

IRWIN

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